

We claim:

1. An RFID device, comprising:
 - (a) an interrogation source for obtaining information from an RFID element associated with an item;
 - (b) an indicator for indicating information regarding one or both of (i) a class of materials to which the item belongs, and (ii) a desired location for that item.
2. The RFID device of claim 1, wherein the indicator provides at least one of an audible and a visual indication.
3. The RFID device of claim 1, wherein the device is portable and adapted for carriage and hands-free use by a person.
4. The RFID device of claim 1, wherein the information of step (b) is obtained from memory within the RFID device.
5. The RFID device of claim 1, wherein the information of step (b) is obtained from memory separate from the RFID device by upload.
6. The RFID device of claim 1, wherein the information of step (b) is obtained from the tag on the item.
7. A method of using an RFID device, comprising the steps of:
 - (a) interrogating an optical bar code associated with an item to obtain information about that item; and
 - (b) storing that information on an RFID element to create a tag for the item.
8. The method of claim 7, further including the step of providing an adhesive on the tag.
9. The method of claim 8, wherein the adhesive is a repositionable adhesive.

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10. The method of claim 7, wherein the method further includes the step of (c) obtaining additional information about the item and storing that information on the RFID element.

5 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the additional information is obtained from LAV software having a database including information about the item.

10 12. The method of claim 10, wherein the additional information is obtained visually from the item, and is entered into the RFID device manually.

15 13. A method of obtaining information from a group of items having RFID elements associated therewith, comprising the steps of:

- (a) interrogating the items to determine information about their identity;
- (b) organizing the identification information in a predetermined order; and
- (c) providing an output indicative of that order.

20 14. The method of claim 13, wherein the output is an interactive visual or auditory display.

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15 15. The method of claim 14, wherein the operator can provide input to the display in order to control it.

25 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the output is a paper listing.

17. A method of identifying a specific item having an RFID element associated therewith from among a larger group of items also having RFID elements associated therewith, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an RFID interrogation device with information identifying the specific item;
- (b) interrogating the larger group of items; and
- (c) providing a signal when the RFID device interrogates the RFID tag associated with the specific item.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the information provided in step (a) is information identifying a class of items, and step (c) comprises providing a signal when the RFID device interrogates an RFID tag associated with a specific item within that class.

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Sub A → 19. The method of claim 18, wherein the class of items are items belonging in the same section of the library.

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20. A method of using an RFID device, comprising the steps of:

- (a) interrogating an item having an RFID element associated therewith;
- (b) inputting information to the device to describe a location;
- (c) determining whether the interrogated item belongs at the location; and
- (d) providing an appropriate signal.

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21. The method of claim 20, wherein the location has a separate RFID element, and step (b) comprises scanning the RFID element associated with that location.

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22. The method of claim 20, wherein the item is a library material, and the location is a library storage location.

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Sub A5 → 23. A method of using a handheld RFID device for reading information from an RFID element, comprising the steps of passing the device over group of items, detecting where within the group of items a desired item should be placed, and providing an indication to the user of that location.

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24. A method of using an RFID device, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a database of items;
- (b) providing an order in which such items are to be selected;
- (c) providing an indication of the next item on the list to be selected;
- (d) interrogating an RFID element associated with the item indicated in step (c) using the RFID device; and
- (e) providing an indication of the next item on the list to be selected.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the order provided in step (b) is a list in
the order in which items are to be shelved in a library.

5 26. A method of using an RFID device for identifying and locating items
having an RFID element associated therewith, comprising:

(a) providing information to the RFID device identifying a location;
(b) interrogating the items with the RFID device to determine the identity of the
items; and
(c) associating the items with the location.

10 27. The method of claim 26, wherein step (a) comprises interrogating an RFID
elements associated with a location.

15 28. The method of claim 26, wherein the method further includes the step of
arranging and interrogating the items in a series, so that the RFID device can determine
the location of one item with respect to other items.

20 29. The method of claim 26, wherein the items are library materials

30. The method of claim 26, wherein the location is a cart.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein step (b) comprises the passing the cart
through a tunnel.

25 32. The method of claim 30, wherein step (c) comprises passing the RFID
device into or through the cart.

33. The method of claim 26, wherein the location includes a shelf having an
antenna associated therewith.

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34. The method of claim 26, further including the step of:
(d) displaying the items and their respective locations.

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35. The method of claim 26, further including the step of:
(d) downloading the information in step (c) to a computer.

5 36. A method of verifying the order of items of interest in a free-shelving system, the materials each including an RFID tag associated therewith, comprising the steps of:

10 (a) interrogating RFID tags associated with three items of interest using an RFID device;
 (b) determining from the information obtained whether the item of interest that is located between the other two items belongs between the other two items; and
 (c) providing an appropriate signal.

15 37. The method of claim 36, wherein the information obtained is provided by the RFID tag itself.

20 38. The method of claim 36, wherein the information obtained is provided by a database separate from the RFID tag.

25 39. The method of claim 36, wherein the database is separate from the RFID device

40. A method of locating an item of interest associated with an RFID element among a larger group of items each associated with an RFID element, comprising the steps of:

25 (a) providing a card having an RFID element;
 (b) transmitting information to the card and storing that information in the RFID element;
 (c) positioning RFID card readers at positions near the item of interest;
 (d) interrogating the RFID card with the RFID card reader; and
 (e) providing an indication of the location of the item of interest relative to the location of the RFID card reader.

41. The method of claim 40, wherein step (e) comprises providing a visual display of the location of the item of interest.

5 42. The method of claim 41, wherein the visual display comprises a map of the area including the item of interest.

10 43. The method of claim 40, wherein the item of interest is a library material, and the larger group of items comprise other library materials.

15 44. A method of locating an item of interest associated with an RFID element among a larger group of items each associated with an RFID element, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a portable RFID device;

(b) providing information to the RFID device that identifies the item of interest;

15 (c) interrogating with the RFID device various locations at which the item of interest may be located; and

(d) obtaining information from those locations regarding the location of the item of interest.

20 45. The method of claim 44, wherein the method further includes the step of:

(e) displaying information regarding the location of the item of interest.

25 46. The method of claim 44, wherein the information is provided to the RFID device in step (b) by reading an RFID element having that information.

30 47. The method of claim 44, wherein the information is provided to the RFID device by a manual keypad.

30 48. A method of monitoring the use of an area of interest, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing prospective users with an RFID card;

(b) providing RFID readers at one or more locations in proximity to the area of interest;

(c) interrogating RFID cards in the area of interest using the RFID readers; and
(d) providing a signal indicative of the presence of an RFID card in proximity
to the RFID reader.

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49. The method of claim 48, wherein the area of interest is at least part of a
library.

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50. The method of claim 48, wherein the signal provided in step (d) includes
information as to the user to whom the RFID card is registered, and access to the area
of interest may be permitted or denied to that user.